P75
April -May 2004

W.i.t.c.h.

22

Will Irma Taranee Cornelia Hay Lin

Get your fill of summer sweets and treats

The duel for the Heart of Kandrakar begins!

A BROKEN HEART

ISSN 1592-0143
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SUMMIT

A broken heart

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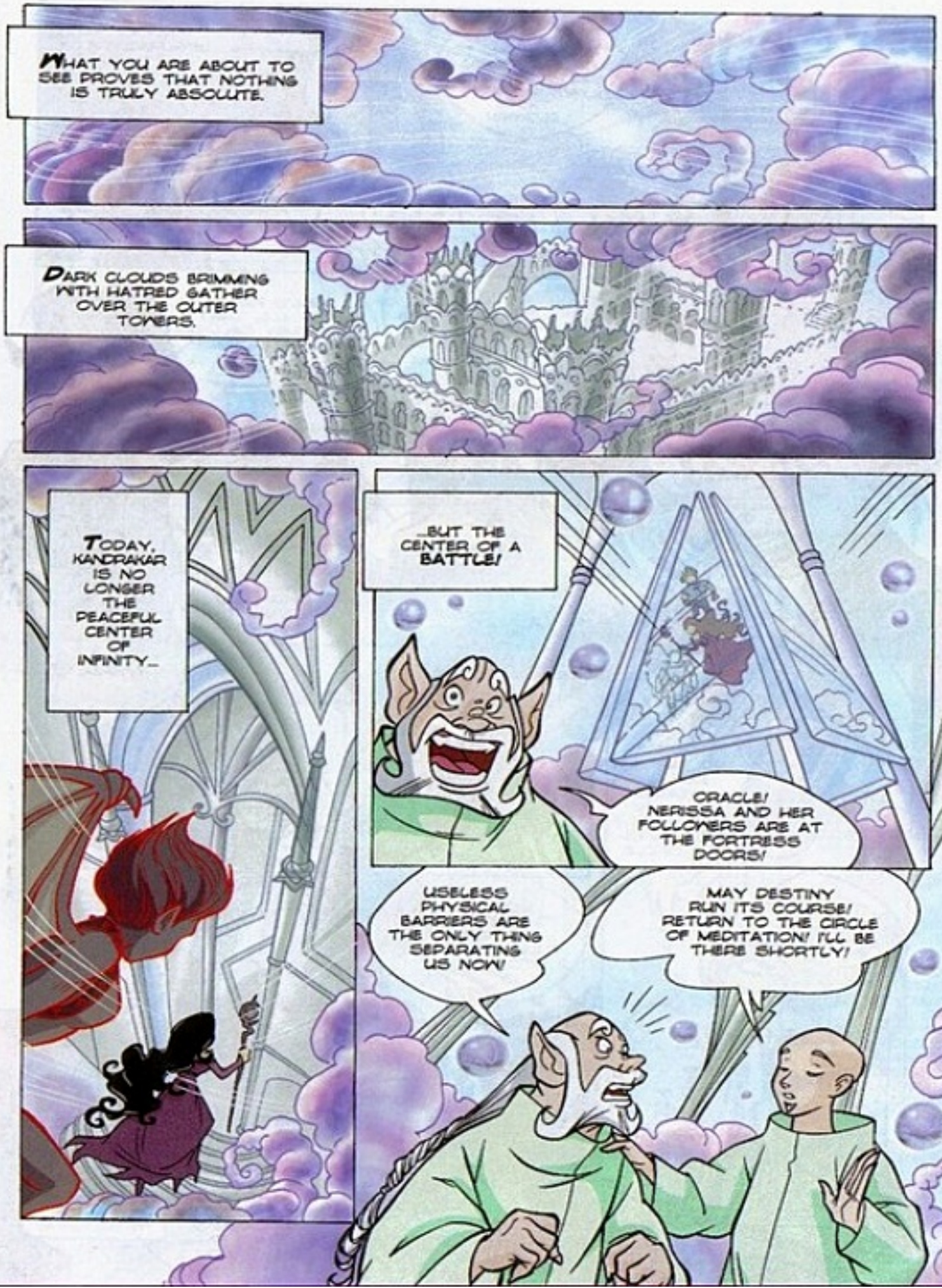

WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO SEE PROVES THAT NOTHING IS TRULY ABSOLUTE.
DARK CLOUDS BRIMMING WITH HATRED GATHER OVER THE OUTER TOWERS.
TODAY, KANDRAKAR IS NO LONGER THE PEACEFUL CENTER OF INFINITY...
...BUT THE CENTER OF A BATTLE!
ORACLE! NERISSA AND HER FOLLOWERS ARE AT THE FORTRESS DOORS!
USELESS PHYSICAL BARRIERS ARE THE ONLY THING SEPARATING US NOW!
MAY DESTINY RUN ITS COURSE! RETURN TO THE CIRCLE OF MEDITATION! I'LL BE THERE SHORTLY!
13

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOU AREN'T GOING TO DO ANYTHING? GET OUT THERE AND SQUASH THOSE CLOWNS!
HAVEN'T YOU FIGURED IT OUT YET, IRMA?
THAT'S OUR JOB!
WILL'S RIGHT! AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHY THEY CALL US THE GUARDIANS!
WELL, GIRLS NEVER USED TO DO ALL THE DIRTY WORK!
ACTUALLY, OUR TASK IS JUST AS DIFFICULT AS YOURS!
THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN, HONORABLE YAN LIN! WE MUST COMPLETE THE CIRCLE!
I HAVE TO GO, LITTLE ONE! TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!
GRANDMA, L.
LOOK! THE WITCH AND HER THUGS HAVE STOPPED!
THEY MUST BE PLANNING THEIR FINAL ATTACK!

I SAY WE SPLIT UP! TOGETHER, THOSE MONSTERS ARE TOO DANGEROUS!
RIGHT! EACH ONE OF US WILL PICK A RIVAL! JUST LIKE THE SHOOTOUTS IN WESTERNS!

I GET DIBS ON EMBER! FIRE AND WATER DON'T MIX!
GOOD THINKING, MISS GAME PLAN! IN THAT CASE, I GET TRIDART!

I'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH KHOR!
GOOD! THAT LEAVES ME WITH NERISSA...
NO!

CALEB! I NEED YOU TO HELP CORNELIA TAKE ON SHAGON!
YOU GOT IT! I'VE SEEN WHAT HE'S LIKE" AND I KNOW HOW DANGEROUS HE IS!

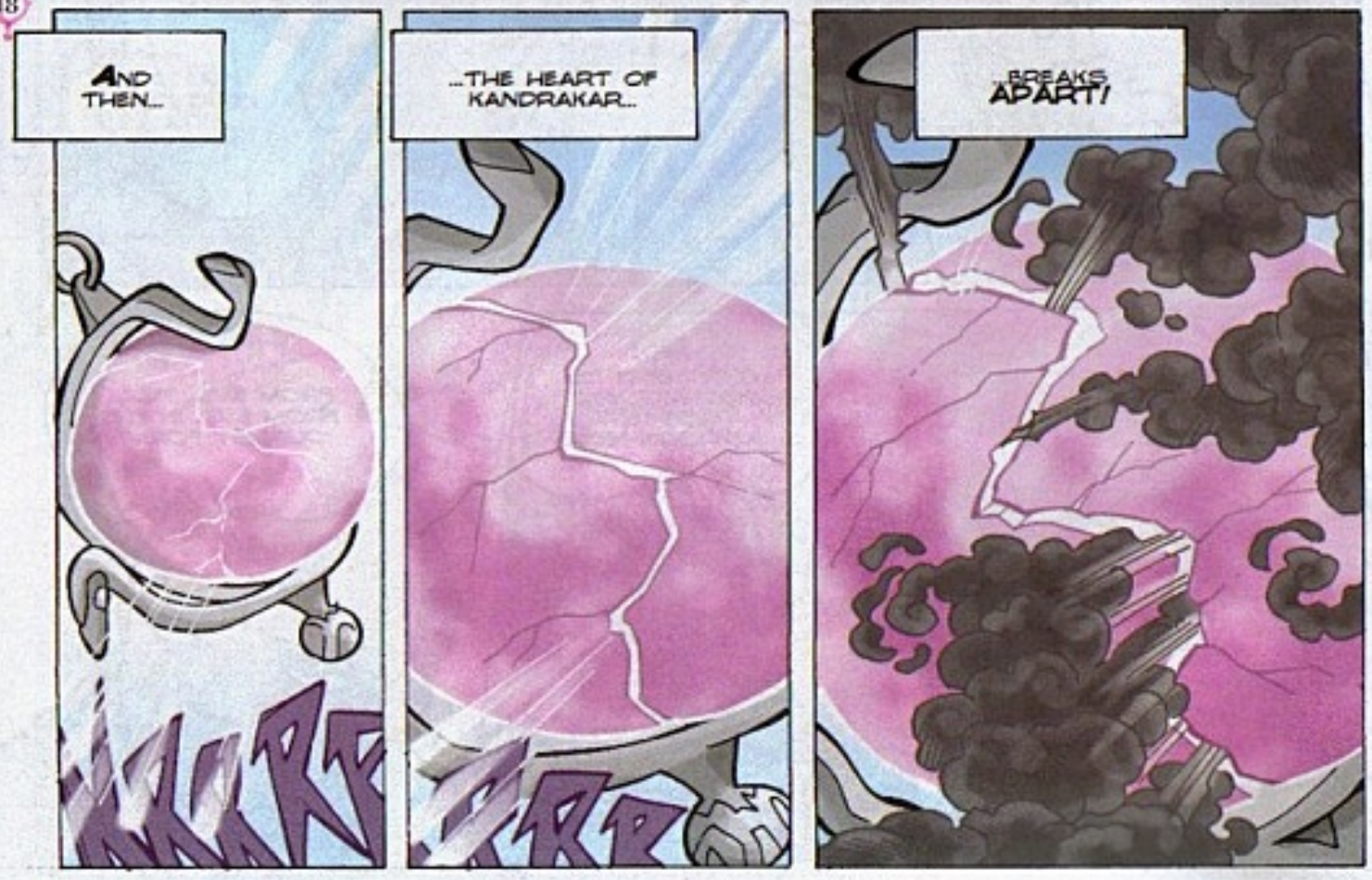
WILL! ARE YOU GOING TO FIGHT NERISSA ALL BY YOURSELF?
OH NO! I WON'T BE ALONE! I'LL HAVE THE STAR OF CASSIDY BY MY SIDE!

I KNOW THIS PENDANT IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN HOLD OUT AGAINST THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR'S POWER!

SWASH
AAAAH! WHAT THE...?
IT CAN'T BE!
STAND BACK! THE GUARDIANS HAVE BEEN ENCLOSED_
IN AN ETHEREAL SHIELD!
16
ORACLE! WHAT'S GOING ON? THE STAR OF CASSIDY HAS TRAPPED US!
DON'T TRY TO HARM ITS MAGICAL SURFACE! THAT WOULD BE A FATAL MISTAKE!

ORACLE, NERISSA IS ABOUT TO...
YES, UNFORTUNATELY, I THINK I'VE UNDERSTOOD THE WOMAN'S MAD INTENTIONS!
THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR HAS ALSO GENERATED AN ETHEREAL SHIELD!
LISTEN TO ME, GUARDIANS! NEVER LET YOUR THOUGHTS LEAVE KANDRAKAR! NEVER!
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
17
WHEN THE MINDS OF THOSE INSIDE IT WANDER, THE SHIELD WEAKENS!
SO WHAT? THAT'D BE GREAT! THEN WE COULD DESTROY IT AND GET OUT OF HERE!
NO! IT'S THERE TO PROTECT YOU, NOT TO IMPRISON YOU!
PROTECT US? FROM WHAT?
FROM EVIL, WILL! FROM EVIL IN ITS PUREST FORM!

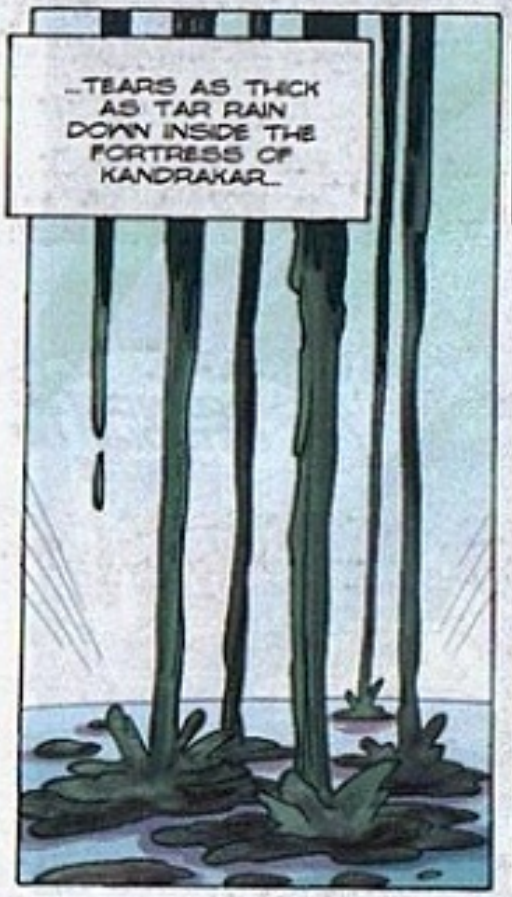
OUTSIDE THE FORTRESS, BEFORE THE ASTONISHED EYES OF THE ORACLE HIMSELF, NERISSA CONCENTRATES, AND THEN...
...A MURMUR! A TERRIBLE ORDER THAT POURS OUT OF HER LIPS LIKE POISON...


AND THEN...
...THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR...
...BREAKS APART!

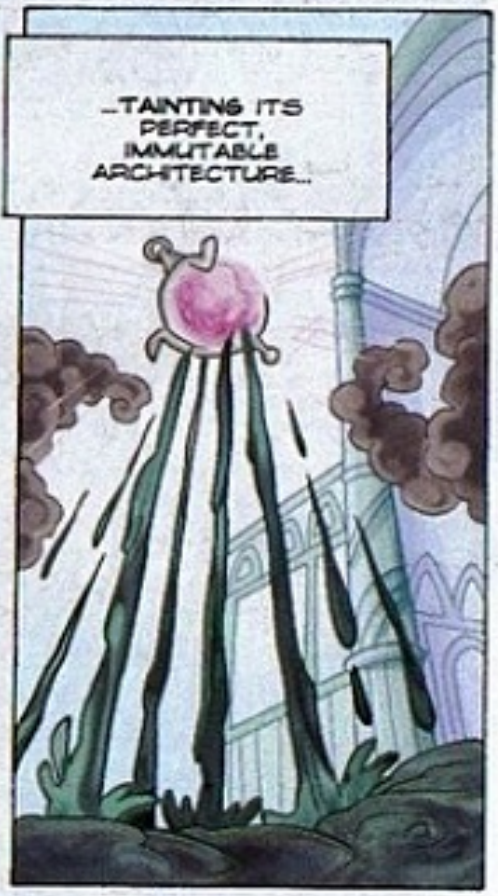
AND SO, THAT SEAL IN THE SHAPE OF A BROKEN HEART, WHICH ALWAYS STOOD FOR THE FORMER GUARDIAN...

...BECAME NOT JUST A SYMBOL, BUT A DECLARATION OF INTENT!

FROM THIS GASH OF THE PENDANT, STRANGE BLACK DROPS BEGIN TO OOZE OUT...


...TEARS AS THICK AS TAR RAIN DOWN INSIDE THE FORTRESS OF KANDRAKAR...

...AND QUICKLY BEGIN TO COVER IT...


...TAINTING ITS PERFECT, IMMUTABLE ARCHITECTURE...

THE ENDLESS STAIRWAY, THE MAJESTIC WALLS, THE SUPERBLY DECORATED FLOORS...
...EVERYTHING DISAPPEARS, ENGULFED BY AN OMINOUS SEA OF BLACK...
...AND KANDRAKAR, WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PLACE OF LIGHT...
...DISAPPEARS INTO DARKNESS!
THAT BLOB THING IS REACHING THE ORACLE AND THE ELDERS!
OH, NO! GRANDMA!
GRANDMA! GET OUT OF THERE!

"WILL"
THAT'S THE ORACLE'S VOICE!
"ABIDE..."
"BY THE DECISIONS..."
"...OF THE HEART."
GRANDMA! NO!
NOOO!

OH MY GOSH! THAT BLACK LIQUID IS... IS SWALLOWING THEM UP!
THE NEGATIVE ESSENCE OF THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR! EVIL IN ITS PUREST FORM!
AND NOW IT WANTS US, TOO!
SHAA
SHAA
WAAAAAM
TUM
BUT IT CAN'T GET THROUGH THE ETHEREAL SHIELD! IN HERE, WE'RE...
...SAFE!
...A STRANGE SLEEPINESS OVERWHELMS HER, AND IN A MERE INSTANT...
JUST AS WILL FINISHES HER SENTENCE...
...IT WHISKS HER AWAY TO OBLIVION.

AND AFTER THE DARKNESS...
...LIGHT!
?
WHAT THE...
WHAT HAPPENED TO KANDRAKAR? HOW CAN I BE BACK IN MY ROOM?

EARLY MORNING! THE SUN IS SHINING, THE BIRDS ARE SINGING AND...
OUCH!
OKAY, DORMOUSE! IF YOU WANTED TO PROVE THIS WASN'T A DREAM, YOU'VE DONE IT!
TAKE IT EASY! I'LL GO GET YOU SOMETHING TO EAT!
AM I REALLY HOME? OR IS THIS JUST AN ILLUSION?
IN ANY CASE, THERE'S ONE THING I'M SURE OF...
...I DON'T FEEL THE STAR OF CASSIDY ANYMORE!

HEY THERE, KIDDO! DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE UP ALREADY!
?
MOM? IS THAT... IS THAT REALLY YOU?
I WAS WRONG! YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY STILL SLEEPING!
GO AHEAD AND KEEP YOUR EYES SHUT, BUT USE YOUR NOSE TO FIND YOUR WAY INTO THE KITCHEN!
I'VE GOT PRETTY GOOD CHANCES OF GETTING TO WORK ALMOST ON TIME TODAY!
A PEACEFUL AWAKENING, A HEARTY BREAKFAST, LIVELY CONVERSATION... MORE OR LESS A TYPICAL MORNING!
IF WILL DIDN'T KNOW THIS KIND OF NORMALITY ISN'T AT ALL NORMAL FOR HER, SHE MIGHT EVEN BE HAPPY!

SOON AFTERWARDS, OUTSIDE SHEFFIELD INSTITUTE...
NO MORE POWERS?
NOT A TRACE!
I CAN'T EVEN MAKE A DROP OF WATER DANCE AROUND!
SAME THING WITH FIRE! I CAN'T CONTROL IT ANYMORE!
IT LOOKS LIKE THE POWER OF EARTH HAS LEFT ME!
AND MY POWERS OVER AIR SEEM TO HAVE FLOWN THE COOP!
WELL, WE'VE ALREADY SEEN OUR POWERS DROP TO MINIMUM LEVELS!"
"AS READERS OF W.I.T.C.H. #13 AND #14 KNOW.
BUT THIS TIME WE'VE LOST THEM COMPLETELY!
WHAT WORRIES ME THE MOST ABOUT ALL OF THIS IS THAT NONE OF US SEEM TO BE VERY UPSET ABOUT IT!
IT'S AS THOUGH... AS THOUGH A HEAVY WEIGHT HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM OUR SHOULDERS!

GIRLS! THE SCHOOL BELL HAS WELL PAST RUNG!
UM, THANKS, MS. KNICKERBOCKER! I GUESS WE DIDN'T HEAR IT!
WELL, I GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO GET MOVING THEN! NOW, MARCH!
YOU THINK I ENJOY BEING A GUARDIAN?
I'D SAY SO!
I BET SHE EATS DOG BISCUITS FOR BREAKFAST!
LOOK AT THEM LAUGHING! IT'S LIKE THEY'VE ALREADY FORGOTTEN HOW SERIOUS THE SITUATION IS!
AND SO, THE GIRLS' SCHOOL DAY BEGINS IN A MORE NORMAL MANNER...

FOR IRMA, HAY LIN AND TARANEE, THE HOURS SEEM ENDLESS!
...AND EVEN FOR WILL AND CORNELIA, SCHOLASTIC DEMANDS OUTWEIGH ALL OTHER PROBLEMS.
DRIIIIIN
THE DAY TICKS AWAY AS USUAL, UNTIL THE FINAL SCHOOL BELL RINGS, PUNCTUAL AND CRYING FREEDOM!
SO, SHOULD WE GO BACK TO WHERE WE LEFT OFF TALKING?
TALKING ABOUT WHAT?
OUR POWERS, HAY LIN! WE'VE GOT TO DECIDE ON WHAT TO DO!
YEAH, YEAH! RIGHT! COULD WE TALK ABOUT IT LATER ON?
ERIC'S THERE! I'M GOING OVER TO SAY HI, AND THEN I'LL BE BACK, OKAY?
?!

HEY THERE! WHY THE LONG FACE?
HI! I JUST GOT A CALL FROM MY GRANDPA.
SOME DELINQUENT BROKE INTO THE OBSERVATORY AND WRECKED THE ENTIRE PLANETARIUM!"
IF YOU NEED HELP WITH CLEANING UP THE MESS, I'M FREE THIS AFTERNOON!
WHY NOT? THANKS!
*READ W.I.T.C.H. #21 SHADOWS OF TOMORROW
SOMETHING FUNNY IS GOING ON HERE! IT'S NOT LIKE HAY LIN TO ACT THIS WAY!
YEAH! IN KANDRAKAR, SHE WAS DEVASTATED WHEN SHE SAW HER GRANDMA TRAPPED IN THAT BLACK GOO...
...BUT NOW IT'S LIKE SHE WASN'T EVEN THINKING ABOUT IT! IT'S AS IF SHE'D BLOTTED IT OUT COMPLETELY...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HER, EITHER!
THIS SCHOOL HAS GUYS WHO ARE WAY CUTER THAN ERIC!
?
?
29

FOR EXAMPLE, EVER SEEN HIM?
I HAVE! HE'S A NEW KID IN HIS LAST YEAR OF SCHOOL!
WELL, HE JUST SMILED AT ME!
THAT WAS A GRIMACE OF PAIN! HIS FRIEND JUST ELBOWED HIM IN THE RIBS!
BUT HE DID LOOK MY WAY!
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE RIGHT! HE KEEPS GLANCING OVER AT YOU!
PLEASE, CORNELIA! TELL ME NONE OF THIS IS NORMAL!
IT'S NOT, WILL! SOMETHING STRANGE IS GOING ON! EVEN WITH TARANEE! LOOK AT HER! SHE JUST SAW NIGEL AND SHE'S LOST IT!
UH-OH! TROUBLE'S COMING! HER MOTHER JUST SHOWED UP!
SHE'S FORBIDDEN TARANEE TO SEE HIM! WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!

WHAT DO WE DO, CORNELIA?
WE HAVE TO DISTRACT HER! IF SHE CATCHES THEM, THERE'LL BE TROUBLE!
HELLO, MRS. COOK! ARE YOU LOOKING FOR TARANEE?
I HAD TO PICK HER UP TODAY! HAVE YOU SEEN HER ANYWHERE IN THIS MAD CROWD?
ACTUALLY, SHE'S ALREADY GONE! ISN'T THAT RIGHT, WILL?
YEP! SHE'S OUT WITH IRMA, WHO KNOWS WHERE...
GIRLS, DO YOU KNOW WHAT I DO FOR A LIVING?
YOU'RE... YOU'RE A JUDGE?
EXACTLY! AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT I HAVE A KNACK FOR SMELLING LIES!
BUT WE'RE NOT LIARS!
OF COURSE NOT, BUT YOU ARE HER GOOD FRIENDS! WHICH IS EVEN WORSE! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

TARANEE!
MOM, I...
WE'RE LATE AND I STILL HAVE A LOT OF ERRANDS TO RUN! HELLO, NIGEL!
YOU DON'T MIND IF TARANEE AND I DASH OFF, DO YOU?
UM, OF COURSE NOT, MRS. COOK! WE...
ARE YOU MAD AT ME?
I HAD A LONG TALK WITH YOUR FATHER LAST NIGHT!
HE CONVINCED ME TO GIVE THE YOUNG MAN A SECOND CHANCE!
WHAT... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WE'RE GOING TO RENT A MOVIE AND ORDER PIZZA TONIGHT! DO YOU WANT TO INVITE HIM?
ARE YOU SERIOUS?

THAT IS, IF YOU FEEL LIKE SPENDING THE EVENING WITH TWO...
NIGEL! NIGEL!
...OLD FOLKS!
NIGEL! OH, NIGEL!
A KISS! RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER MOTHER! RIGHT IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY!
TARANEE IS SO HAPPY THAT SHE'S TOTALLY FORGOTTEN HER NATURAL SHYNESS...
...AND WITH IT, EVERYTHING ELSE!

LATER ON, WHILE HEADING HOME...
NO! IT'S DEFINITELY NOT NORMAL!
I MEAN, I'M HAPPY FOR TARANEE AND EVERYTHING, BUT...
I UNDERSTAND YOU PERFECTLY, WILL!
DINNN
IT'S AS IF THE OTHERS WERE TAKING EVERYTHING TOO LIGHTLY!
MAYBE WE'VE ALL JUST GOTTEN THE LIVES WE DESERVE! EVER THINK OF THAT?
YOU MEAN... A LIFE WITHOUT POWERS?
SSSSHHH
A LIFE WITHOUT PROBLEMS! BUT MAYBE THEY'RE THE EXACT SAME THING!
SSSSHHH
HUH? WHY DID YOU GET OFF, TOO? THIS IS MY STOP!
OH, WHAT WAS I THINKING? I'LL JUST WAIT FOR THE NEXT BUS!

IF YOU HAVE TO GO, THERE'S NO PROBLEM!
ARE YOU KIDDING? I'LL WAIT WITH YOU! WE HAVE LOTS TO TALK ABOUT!
YOU KNOW WHAT I SAY? LET'S GET EVERYONE TOGETHER LATER THIS AFTERNOON, AT MY HOUSE!
SURE THING!
WE'VE GOT TO TRY TO SNAP THE OTHERS OUT OF IT AND...
AM I INTERRUPTING SOMETHING?
DLIN
DLIN
MATT?
HI! I WAS HOPING I'D RUN INTO YOU! NOBODY ANSWERED AT YOUR PLACE!
YOU... YOU WERE WAITING FOR ME?
I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU IF YOU FELT LIKE HELPING ME OUT AT MY GRANDPA'S PET SHOP THIS AFTERNOON!
ARE YOU KIDDING? I TOTALLY FEEL LIKE IT!
?
COOL! HOP ON AND I'LL GIVE YOU A RIDE!

DO YOU MIND, CORNELIA? I MEAN, THE BLUES SHOULD BE HERE ANY MINUTE NOW, AND WE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT EVERYTHING, DIDN'T WE?
NO... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! AND THEY ALL SAY I'M THE INCONSISTENT ONE!

WILL SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY ONE WHO SENSED THAT SOMETHING WASN'T RIGHT...

IT'S AS IF THE GUYS WERE FORGETTING ALL ABOUT OUR ROLES! OUR MISSION!

...BUT SEEING MATT WAS ALL IT TOOK TO MAKE HER FORGET ABOUT GETTING TOGETHER AT MY HOUSE AND EVERYTHING ELSE!

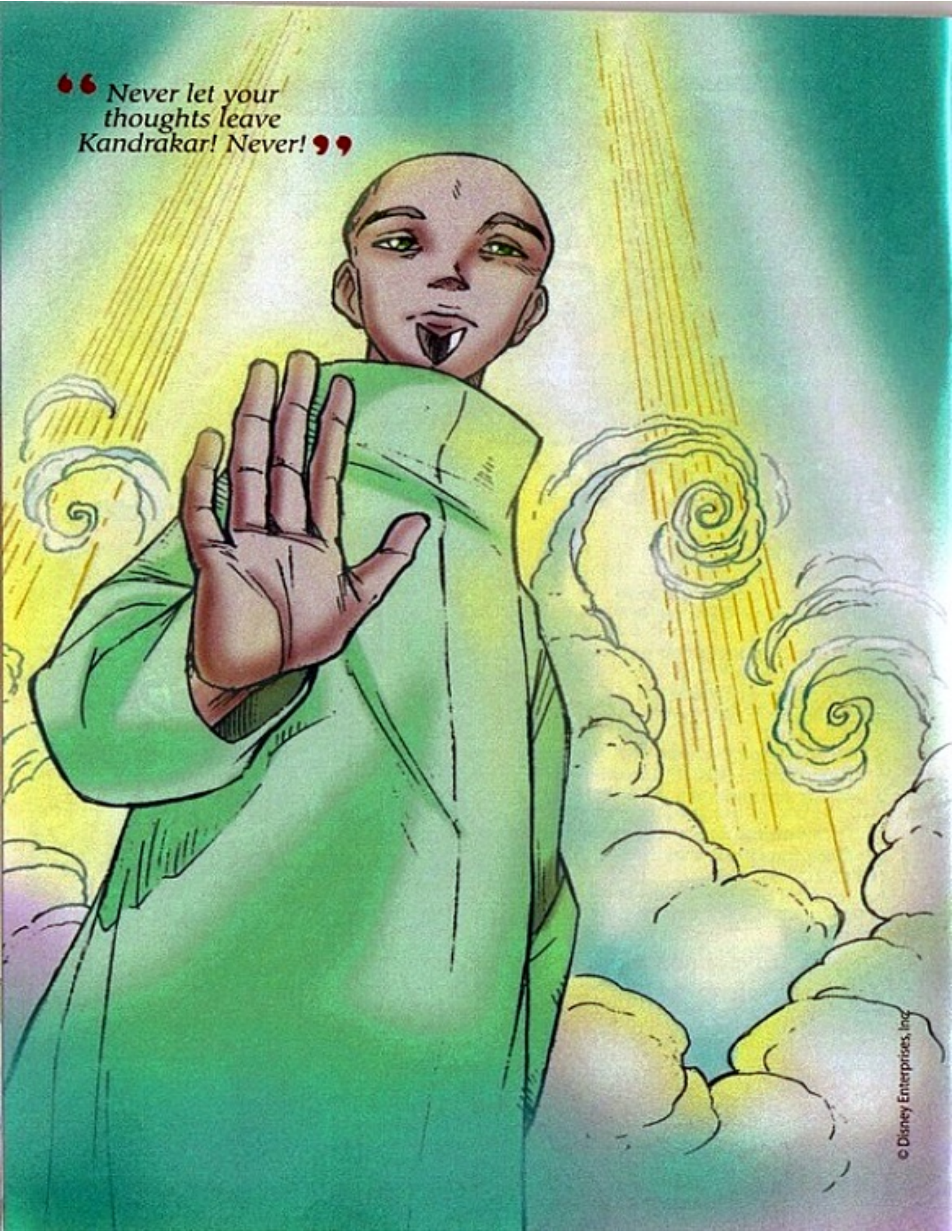
I DON'T WANT TO FORGET WHO I AM! I DON'T WANT TO FORGET CALEB! NO MATTER WHAT PROBLEMS WE MIGHT BE GOING THROUGH!
SSSSHHH

I'VE ALREADY FORGOTTEN HIM ONCE, AND THAT'S NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN AGAIN!

I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS RIGHT NOW, BUT...
33
?
FWIIIIII
THAT'S CHEEPEE! THE OLD GUARDIAN KADMA'S RAVEN! HE CAN'T BE HERE BY PURE COINCIDENCE!
ISSSHHH
YEAH, THERE MUST BE A SPELL OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT BEHIND ALL THIS!
CORNELIA FOLLOWS CHEEPEE, FULL OF HOPE! AND SHE, WHO WAS ONCE THE MOST SKEPTICAL OF THE GROUP...
...NOW FINDS HERSELF WANTING TO BELIEVE IN MAGIC WITH ALL HER HEART!

EVEN WHEN WE GO INTO RETIREMENT, WE GUARDIANS KEEP A TRACE OF OUR POWERS!
IT'S CALLED AN ETERNAL GIFT AND IT'S SOME SORT OF MAGIC TOUCH THAT NEVER LEAVES US!
"I, FOR INSTANCE, KEPT MY REMARKABLY GREEN THUMB!"
BUT TODAY, INSTEAD OF JUST BEING WEAK, THAT POWER VANISHED COMPLETELY!
JUST LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME AND THE GUARDIANS!
IT'S STRANGE, DESTINY... WHAT YOU CONSIDER AS A PROBLEM, IS LIBERATING FOR ME...
NOW THERE'S NOTHING THAT CONNECTS ME TO KANDRAKAR ANY LONGER!

FIRST THE GIRLS FORGET EVERYTHING, AND NOW YOU!
FORGET?
YEAH! THEY'RE ACTING LIKE THIS STUFF ABOUT OUR POWERS DIDN'T INTEREST THEM! LIKE THEY...
...THEY HAD NEVER FELT MAGICAL, YOU MEAN?
THAT'S IT, THEN! I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT COULD EVER HAPPEN, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER EXPLANATION!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND, CORNELIA? YET IT'S ALL SO INCREDIBLY SIMPLE...
...KANDRAKAR NO LONGER EXISTS!
End of Part One.


“Never let your thoughts leave Kandrakar! Never!”
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"YES, NOW EVERYTHING IS CLEAR! LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY..."
"NERISSA GOT THE ESSENCE OF PURE EVIL TO SEEP OUT OF THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR!"
"PROTECTED BY THE BARRIER OF THE ETHEREAL SHIELD THAT WAS GENERATED BY THE STAR OF CASSIDY..."
"...WE ALL SAW THE ESSENCE COVER UP THE FORTRESS, THE ORACLE AND THE ELDERS OF THE CONGREGATION!"
"THEN WE PASSED OUT, BUT THE STAR OF CASSIDY MUST HAVE TRANSPORTED US..."
"...TO HEATHERFIELD..."
...BEFORE KANDRAKAR DISAPPEARED FOREVER!

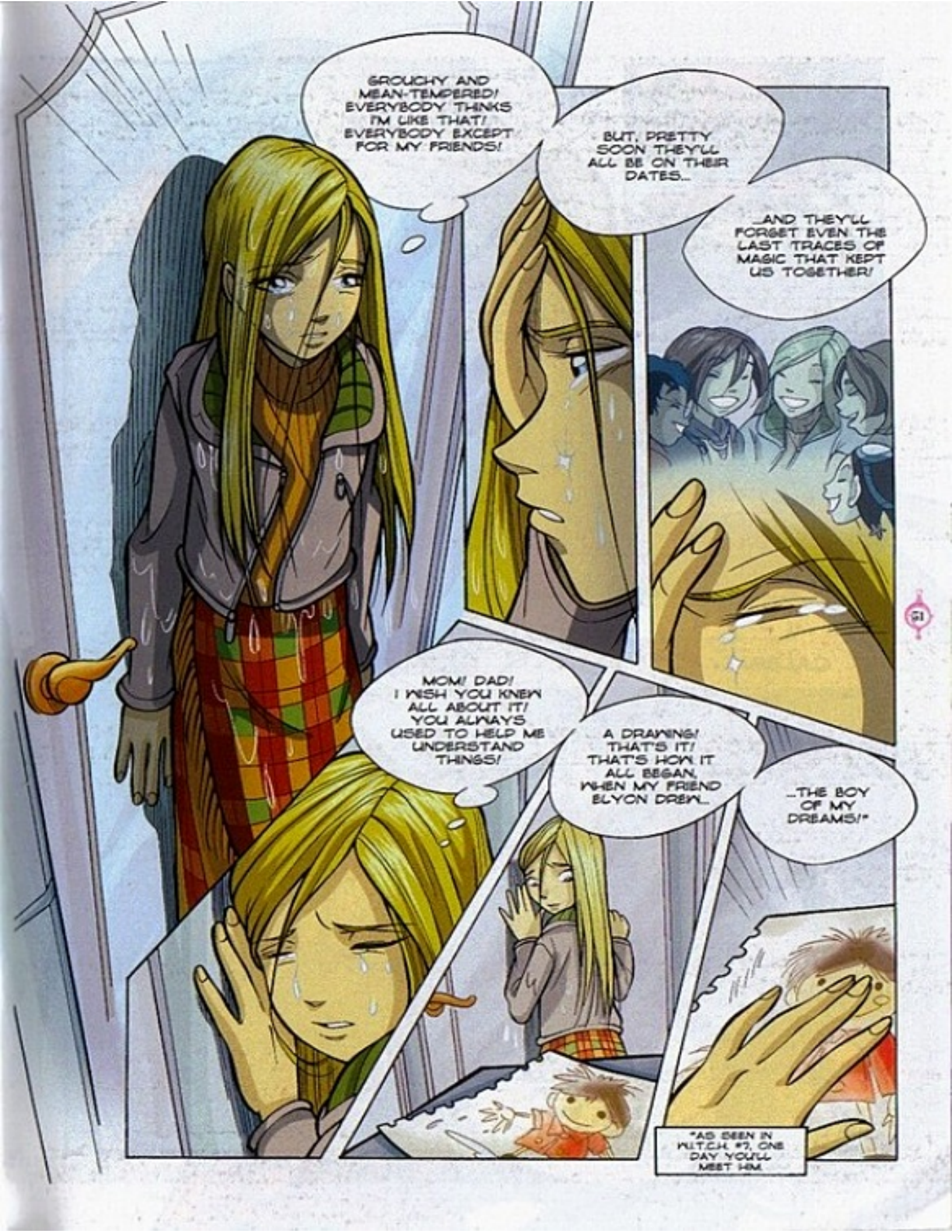
CALEB WAS WITH US INSIDE THE SHIELD! I JUST HOPE HE AT LEAST MANAGED TO GET BACK TO MERIDIAN!
WHY ARE YOU ALL LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT? DON'T YOU GET IT? IT'S ALL SO CLEAR!
LOSING OUR POWERS! THE FACT THAT WE'RE FORGETTING OUR ROLES!
KANDRAKAR DOESN'T EXIST ANYMORE! I KNOW IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER EXPLANATION AND...
CORNELIA! YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY UPSET!
BUT I'M HAVING A HARD TIME FOLLOWING YOU, SO... UM... I THINK I HAVE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS. FOR STARTERS...
COKE
...WHAT'S KANDRAKAR?

NO!
T-TELL ME YOU'RE ALL JOKING!
TUMP
CORNELIA, WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS! EVEN IF WE DON'T GET WHAT...
STAY AWAY FROM ME!
WAIT! WE...
DON'T COME NEAR ME!
DON'T!

EVERYTHING! THEY'VE FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING! I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH!
Golden
CORNELIA!
P-PETER?
EVERYTHING OKAY? YOU SEEM PRETTY UPSET!
IT'S... IT'S NOTHING! IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR SISTER, SHE'S AT GOLDEN!
GREAT! I HAVE TO TALK TO HER ABOUT TONIGHT! NIGEL'S COMING OVER AND...
...MY MOM ASKED ME TO PICK UP A VIDEOTAPE, SO I...
DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?

CORNELIA RUNS OFF, TOTALLY SHAKEN! SHE'S SCARED, CONFUSED, BUT SHE'S ALSO BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND!
HER FRIENDS ALL STARTED TO FORGET EVERYTHING WHEN THEY SAW THE BOYS THEY LIKED!
HAY LIN AND ERIC! TARANEE AND NIGEL! IRMA AND THE NEW BOY IN TOWN! WILL AND MATT, AND NOW...
...AND NOW IT'S HER TURN! BECAUSE IT'S CLEAR THAT SOMETHING IS CHANGING WITHIN HER MIND!
SHE DESPERATELY TRIES TO REMEMBER CALEB, BUT INSTEAD OF HIS FACE, SHE SEES PETER'S!
CALEB, NOT PETER! CALEB, NOT PETER! CALEB! CALEB!

BROUUM
YEAH, POP, I AM DRENCHED! YEAH, MA, I DID FORGET MY UMBRELLA! I'M NOT HUNGRY, SO LEAVE ME ALONE!
DON'T SAY ONE SINGLE WORD, LILIAN! JUST GET OUT OF MY ROOM AND STAY OUT!
?
CLUNK
CLUD
?
Do
Or


GROUCHY AND MEAN-TEMPERED! EVERYBODY THINKS I'M LIKE THAT! EVERYBODY EXCEPT FOR MY FRIENDS!
BUT, PRETTY SOON THEY'LL ALL BE ON THEIR DATES...
...AND THEY'LL FORGET EVEN THE LAST TRACES OF MAGIC THAT KEPT US TOGETHER!
MOM! DAD! I WISH YOU KNEW ALL ABOUT IT! YOU ALWAYS USED TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND THINGS!
A DRAWING! THAT'S IT! THAT'S HOW IT ALL BEGAN, WHEN MY FRIEND ELYON DREW...
...THE BOY OF MY DREAMS!"
"AS SEEN IN W.I.T.C.H. #7, ONE DAY YOU'LL MEET HIM.

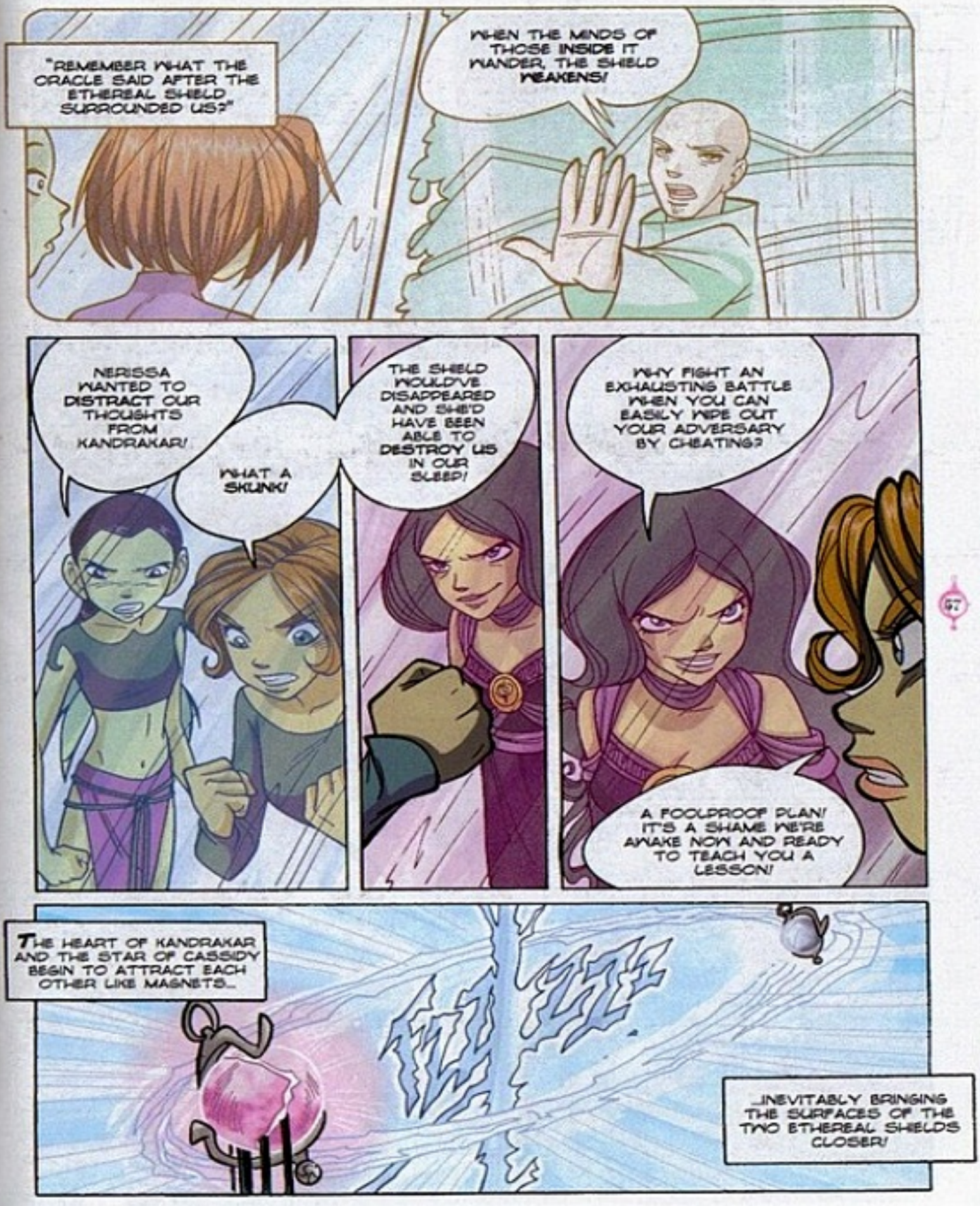
FRUUUMP
THE DRAWING! IT'S HERE! IT'S GOT TO BE HERE!
YES! YESSS!
CALEB!
YOUR MOUTH! YOUR EYES! I CAN SEE THEM! I CAN TOUCH THEM!
NOW NOBODY CAN TAKE YOU AWAY FROM ME! NOBODY!

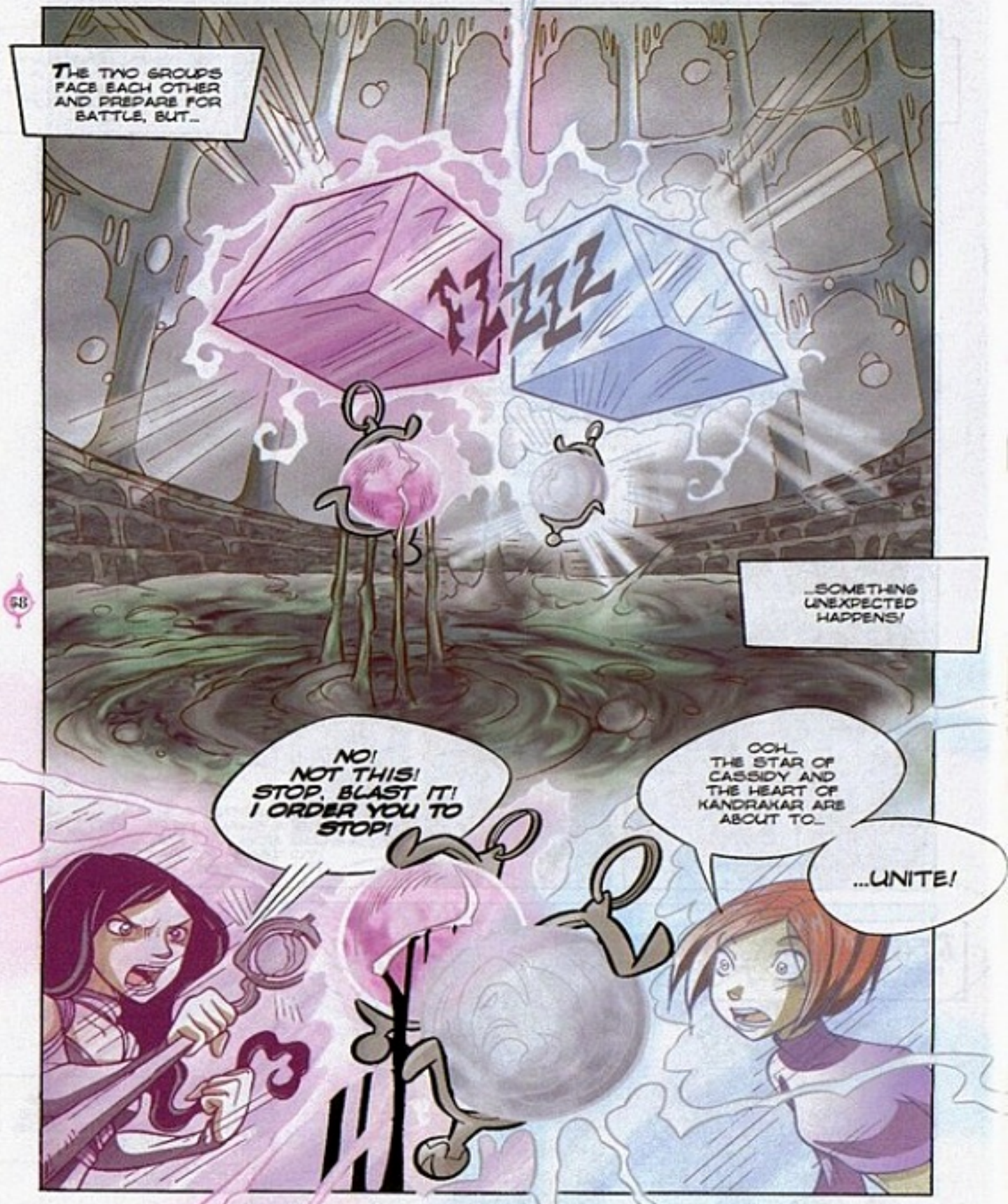
THE MOMENT CORNELIA REMEMBERS CALEB'S FACE, EVERYTHING AROUND HER CHANGES...
HEATHERFIELD, EARTH... EVERYTHING DISAPPEARS, AND CORNELIA WAKES UP TO FIND HERSELF...
...BESIDE THE BOY SHE LOVES, BESIDE HER REAL FRIENDS...
...INSIDE THE ETHEREAL SHIELD IN KANDRAKAR!
CORNELIA'S WOKEN UP! THE SPELL HAS BEEN BROKEN!

N-NERISSA?
THEN... KANDRAKAR STILL EXISTS!
WHY DID SHE OPEN HER EYES?
BLAME IT ON LOVE, SHAGON...
...IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT WRETCHED, UNBEARABLE EMOTION!
CORNELIA IS WAKING UP THE OTHER GUARDIANS!
I CAN SEE THAT, TRIDART... THIS WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN!
NOW... NOW I REMEMBER! THE ORACLE... THE HEART BEING BROKEN! DID WE REALLY GO BACK TO EARTH?
I DON'T KNOW, WILL! MAYBE IT WAS ALL A DREAM! ANOTHER ONE OF NERISSA'S NIGHTMARES!
NO, GIRLS! YOUR BODIES WERE HERE... BUT YOUR MINDS WERE BACK IN HEATHERFIELD!

BEFORE COMING TO KANDRAKAR, YOU CREATED PERFECT DOUBLES OF YOURSELVES!
YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE SAFE INSIDE THE SHIELD, BUT MY MAGIC GOT THROUGH... AND IT MADE YOU FALL INTO A DEEP SLEEP!
THEN I TRANSFERRED YOUR MINDS INTO THE BODIES OF YOUR ASTRAL DROPS!
THEN... WHAT WE LIVED THROUGH IN HEATHERFIELD WAS...
IF THAT'S TRUE, IT MEANS THE NEW BOY IN TOWN ACTUALLY DID GIVE ME THE EYE! WOW!
REAL LIFE, WILL! NOTHING SHOULD HAVE MADE YOU SEE THROUGH MY LITTLE TRICK!
AND MY MOM REALLY SAW ME KISS NIGEL!
EVERYTHING WAS GOING PERFECTLY! EVEN KADMA HELPED ME OUT... UNWITTINGLY!

"WHEN KANDRAKAR WAS SWALLOWED UP IN MY DARK FORCE, HER ETERNAL GIFT TEMPORARILY FADED AWAY..."
WITHOUT THAT LAST TRACE OF HER POWERS, SHE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE FORTRESS NO LONGER EXISTED! WHAT A FOOL!
YOU TRAPPED OUR MINDS IN THE BODIES OF OUR ASTRAL DROPS! THAT EXPLAINS EVERYTHING!
AND WE WERE POWERLESS BECAUSE OUR ASTRAL DROPS DIDN'T HAVE ANY POWERS!
IF YOU ASK ME, YOU SHOULD WORK ON YOUR ASTRAL DROPS! THEY'VE GOT POOR MEMORIES AND THEY'RE QUITE GULLIBLE...
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO CONFUSED US! YOU TRICKED US!
YES... BUT YOUR FRIENDS SEEMED TO ENJOY MY LITTLE TRICK!
YOU'RE SUCH A COWARD! WERE YOU AFRAID OF US? WHY DIDN'T YOU TAKE US ON FACE TO FACE?
I THINK I GET IT... AND I DON'T LIKE IT ONE BIT!


"REMEMBER WHAT THE ORACLE SAID AFTER THE ETHEREAL SHIELD SURROUNDED US?"
WHEN THE MINDS OF THOSE INSIDE IT WANDER, THE SHIELD WEAKENS!
NERISSA WANTED TO DISTRACT OUR THOUGHTS FROM KANDRAKAR!
WHAT A SKUNK!
THE SHIELD WOULD'VE DISAPPEARED AND SHE'D HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DESTROY US IN OUR SLEEP!
WHY FIGHT AN EXHAUSTING BATTLE WHEN YOU CAN EASILY WIPE OUT YOUR ADVERSARY BY CHEATING?
A FOOLPROOF PLAN! IT'S A SHAME WE'RE AWAKE NOW AND READY TO TEACH YOU A LESSON!
THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR AND THE STAR OF CASSIDY BEGIN TO ATTRACT EACH OTHER LIKE MAGNETS...
...INEVITABLY BRINGING THE SURFACES OF THE TWO ETHEREAL SHIELDS CLOSER!


THE TWO GROUPS FACE EACH OTHER AND PREPARE FOR BATTLE, BUT...
FZZZZ
...SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENS!
NO! NOT THIS! STOP, BLAST IT! I ORDER YOU TO STOP!
OOH... THE STAR OF CASSIDY AND THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR ARE ABOUT TO...
...UNITE!

THE STAR OF CASSIDY AND THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR UNITE TO BECOME ONE AND THE SAME THING...
...AND THE TERRIBLE WOUND IN THE HEART IS SEALED UP FOREVER!
THE TWO SHIELDS ARE VANISHING!
THEY'VE ACCOMPLISHED THEIR MISSION! THAT HORRIBLE BLACK SLIME HAS STOPPED!
AND IT'S TIME TO FIGHT!

YOU'VE PLANNED THINGS OUT WELL, GUARDIANS! TO EACH HIS OWN ADVERSARY, THEN!
BUT IN THIS BATTLE, IT'LL BE THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR WHICH WILL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE!
AND IT'S STILL MINE!
?
GET OVER HERE! COME BACK TO YOUR MASTER!
MAYBE IT'S NOT QUITE SURE YET WHO ITS REAL MASTER IS!

BUT IT'S MINE! YOU GAVE IT TO ME YOURSELF!
BUT ONLY BECAUSE YOU TRICKED ME! AND IN ANY CASE, YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK CASSIDY FOR IT NOW!
SHE WAS THE ONE WHO GAVE IT LIFE! THE SAME LIFE THAT YOU DESTROYED YEARS AGO!
THAT'S NOT TRUE! IT WAS A MISTAKE! AN ACCIDENT!
LET ME BE THE ONE TO TAKE THE HEART! YOU KNOW I'M DOING THIS FOR YOU!

WELL, DID YOU HEAR THAT?
AT THE MISS LOT-OF-NERVE CONTEST, SHE'D WIN FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PRIZE!
LET HER TALK, GUYS! I WANT TO HEAR WHAT SHE HAS TO SAY!
?
YES, WILL! LISTEN TO ME AND THINK IT OVER! ONLY THE TWO OF US KNOW WHAT IT REALLY MEANS TO BEAR THE HEART AND HOW DIFFICULT IT IS...

IN HEATHERFIELD, INSIDE THE BODY OF YOUR ASTRAL DROP, YOU GOT A TASTE OF THE REAL LIFE!
"AN EXISTENCE WITHOUT POWERS, OF COURSE... BUT ALSO WITHOUT SECRETS! A HAPPY, CAREFREE LIFE! WITH YOUR MOTHER! WITH YOUR DEAR MATT..."
62
I CAN RELIEVE YOU OF THE HEAVY BURDEN OF YOUR TASK!
GIVE ME THE HEART AGAIN, WILL! YOU DESERVE A NORMAL LIFE!
MAYBE YOU CAN, BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I'M GOING TO STOP CALLING IT TO ME!
BEFORE DISAPPEARING, THE ORACLE TOLD ME SOMETHING IMPORTANT...
"ABIDE..."
"...BY THE DECISIONS..."
"...OF THE HEART!"
SUCCESS! SHE BELIEVED ME!

DECIDING WHO SHOULD GET THAT PENDANT IS AN ACT AS PRESUMPTUOUS AS YOU ARE, NERISSA!
THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR ISN'T A MERE OBJECT, BUT A THINKING ENTITY! IT'S THE SPIRIT OF THE NYMPH XIN JING!*
WHICH MEANS IT'S NOT THE KEEPER WHO CHOOSES THE HEART...
...BUT THE EXACT OPPOSITE!
YAP! YES! WAY TO GO!
WHEW! FOR A MOMENT THERE, I THOUGHT WILL HAD GONE NUTS!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO, NERISSA? DO WE ATTACK THEM?
SILENCE, YOU STUPID CHUNK OF ICE! THINGS HAVE CHANGED...
*AS SEEN IN W.I.T.C.H. #9, THE FOUR DRAGONS.

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS WERE CREATED TO OBEY ME!
URRRGH!
SHRAAZZ!
BUT NOW, EVEN IF I POSSESS A COPY OF THE FIVE POWERS...
KRAAZZ!
AAAH!
ZZ
HEY! NO FAIR! I WAS SUPPOSED TO EXTINGUISH HER MYSELF!
...I NEED TO RECOVER ALL OF MY ENERGY, SO I'LL TAKE IT BACK FROM YOU!

YOU CAN'T DO THAT! THEY'VE SERVED YOU WELL!
I KNOW IT'S UNFAIR... BUT ALL CHILDREN OWE SOMETHING TO THEIR PARENTS!
AND SO, IT'S TIME FOR TRIDART TO BREAK DOWN INTO TEARS!
...AND FOR EMBER TO RETURN TO ASHES!
SHAAATZ!
YOU'RE CRUEL! IS THIS WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THE TWO OF US?
NO, SHAGON! TO GENERATE YOU, I STARTED OUT WITH LIVING MATERIAL!
WHICH IS WHY I WANT EVEN MORE FROM YOU AND KHOR!
I WANT YOUR LIVES!
SHRAAATZZZ
NNNNGH!
ARRRRGH!

SHOULDN'T... SHOULDN'T WE DO SOMETHING?
LIKE WHAT? NERISSA'S DOING IT ALL BY HERSELF!
I HATE... YOU!
OF COURSE YOU DO, SHASON! YOU WERE THE MASTER OF HATE! BUT YOU WERE ALSO UNDISCIPLINED!
WELL, NOW YOU'LL MAKE UP FOR IT! YOU'LL BE THE ONE TO GIVE ME THE EXTRA POWER I NEED TO...
NOOOOOOO!
AAAARGH!
SLASH!
SSSSH!

GRAVELY WOUNDED BY THE BLOW SHE'S RECEIVED, NERISSA STRUGGLES TO DRAG HERSELF AWAY FROM SHASON...
THE KNIGHT OF HATE AND KHOR BOTH FALL TO THE GROUND, UNCONSCIOUS, AND RETURN TO THEIR ORIGINAL FORMS...
A MAN AND HIS DOG, TWO INNOCENT CREATURES WHO RISK BEING CAST INTO ETERNAL DARKNESS.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM! YOU GUYS GO AFTER NERISSA!
CALEB'S RIGHT! THAT WITCH IS GETTING AWAY!
SHAAAK
SHE WON'T GET FAR! SHE'S TOO WEAK!
SEEING HOW SHE'S ZIPPING THROUGH THE SKIES OF KANDRAKAR, THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE!

YOU'RE BOTH RIGHT, GUARDIANS... COUGH, COUGH... I JUST NEEDED TO PLAY FOR TIME!

OVER THE COURSE OF MY LONG IMPRISON-MENT, MY DESIRE FOR REVENGE IS WHAT MADE ME SO STRONG!
WOOOOO

THAT DESIRE STILL PULSES THROUGH MY BODY, WHICH IS WITHERING...

...AND NOW IT'S GOING TO HELP GIVE ME THE STRENGTH...

...TO DESTROY YOU!
WOOOO

WHAT TERRIBLE SKIN! SHE SHOULD REALLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE WRINKLES!
IT'S NOT EASY FOR HER, BUT SHE'S TRYING TO GATHER ALL OF HER STRENGTH!
WE CAN'T LET HER STRIKE FIRST! YOU GUYS READY?
POWERS OF EARTH!
WATER!
SHAAAZZ
SHAAAZZ
SHAAAZZ
SHAAAZZ
AIR!
FIRE!

...AND THE ENERGY OF THE HEART OF KANDRAKAR!
AAAAARRRGH!

NERISSA DISSOLVES, FADING AWAY WITH ONE LAST MUFFLED SCREAM.
AND THE EVIL FORMER GUARDIAN TURNS TO DUST.
WHAT'S LEFT OF HER IS SCATTERED AMONG THE MAGICAL, ETERNAL CLOUDS...
WHICH, GROWING DARK, GATHER AROUND THE FORTRESS...
POUUMPLE
...RAGING DOWN IN A SUDDEN, VIOLENT STORM.
KR-RA
RA KRAAAK
VUUU

WHAT... WHAT'S HAPPENING?
I DON'T KNOW! IT'S ALMOST AS IF...
...THE RAIN WERE WASHING AWAY THE EVIL SPREAD BY NERISSA!
FRUUU SS
THE DARKNESS GIVES WAY TO LIGHT...
...AND THE FORTRESS OF KANDRAKAR SLOWLY RETURNS TO ITS OLD SPLENDOR!
LOOK! DOWN THERE!
IT'S GRANDMA!
PAT PAT
HEE HEE! THIS PLACE DID NEED A GOOD FRESHENING UP!

LATER, IN THE HALL OF THE COUNCIL, IT'S TIME TO EXPLAIN...
KANDRAKAR IS A THRESHOLD, A PASSAGEWAY LEADING TO A MILLION UNIVERSES!
WHEN EVIL CROSSED OVER THE FORTRESS' BARRIER, THOSE UNIVERSES RISKED TOTAL RUIN!
WE HAD THE TASK OF AVOIDING A CATASTROPHIC COLLAPSE!
THAT'S WHY WE FORMED A CIRCLE OF MEDITATION AND LEFT YOU TO YOUR FATE!
"A FEW SECONDS LONGER, HOWEVER, AND WE WOULDN'T HAVE HELD OUT AGAINST THE POWER OF THE DARKNESS THAT HAD SURROUNDED US!"
THAT IS WHY WE, OR BETTER YET...
...I AM INDEBTED TO YOU!
SO NOW WHERE ARE SHAGON AND KHOR?
THEY'VE BEEN TAKEN BACK TO MOUNT THANOS! THEY'LL REMEMBER NOTHING ABOUT THIS TERRIBLE ADVENTURE!

AND CALEB? WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM WHEN HE WAS INSIDE THE ETHEREAL SHIELD?
NOTHING! HE WAS VERY WEAK, AND CONTINUED TO SLEEP! HE DIDN'T NOTICE A THING!
POOR CORNELIA! NOW THAT SHE'S FOUND HIM AGAIN, SHE'S AFRAID OF LOSING HIM!
IF NOTHING ELSE, THIS HAS ALL REMINDED HER THAT LOVE IS STRONGER THAN MAGIC!
BUT WHAT WILL HE DO, ORACLE? WILL HE GO BACK TO MERIDIAN OR LIVE ON EARTH?
I'M SORRY, GUARDIANS... BUT AS YOU MUST HAVE REALIZED BY NOW...
"...THERE ARE QUESTIONS THAT EVEN I CANNOT ANSWER..."
End of Episode 22.